

JOHN SANDFIELD  
MACDONALD

1812-1872



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*The* EDITH *and* LORNE PIERCE  
COLLECTION *of* CANADIANA



*Queen's University at Kingston*



















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SANDFIELD  
MACDONALD

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MACDONALD





Proceedings at the Unveiling  
of the Statue of

John Sandfield Macdonald  
First Prime Minister  
of Ontario

in the

Queen's Park, Toronto  
November 16th, 1909



TORONTO  
Printed and Published by L. K. Cameron, Printer to the  
King's Most Excellent Majesty  
1909



# John Sandfield Macdonald

1812-1872

ON Tuesday, 16th November, 1909, at three o'clock p.m., a large and representative gathering of public men, comprising the members of the Ontario Cabinet, Senators, Members of the House of Commons, Members of the Legislature, Judges and other dignitaries, assembled in the Legislative Chamber in the Parliament Buildings at Toronto in order to take part in the ceremonies attendant upon the unveiling of the statue of the late Honourable John Sandfield Macdonald, Prime Minister of the old Province of Canada, and first Prime Minister of the Province of Ontario under the British North America Act. The sum of ten thousand dollars had been appropriated by the Provincial Legislature two years previously for the purpose, and the work of designing and executing the statue had been entrusted to Mr.

Walter S. Allward, A.R.C.A., Sculptor, of Toronto.

Owing to the inclement weather it was found necessary to utilize the Legislative Chamber for the occasion. A number of ladies occupied seats on the floor of the Chamber, among them Madame Langlois, a daughter of the deceased statesman, who was accompanied by her two sons. An unique feature of the occasion was the presence of the thirteen surviving members of the Civil Service, who first entered upon their duties under the Premiership of Mr. Macdonald. They are: Messrs. A. H. Sydere, Clerk of the House; Lieut.-Col. J. M. Delamere, Clerk Assistant; F. J. Glackmeyer, Sergeant-at-Arms; C. H. Sproule, Assistant Treasurer; Dr. J. G. Hodgins, Historiographer of the Department of Education; George B. Kirkpatrick, Director of Surveys; D. R. Ross, R. H. Brown, J. H. C. Ussher, E. Jenkinson, James Edwards, H. R. Alley and R. A. Kent.

A few minutes after three o'clock His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, the Honourable John Morison Gibson, entered the Chamber, accompanied by the Prime Min-



ister, Sir James Whitney, and took his seat in the Speaker's chair.

Sir James Whitney then said:

Sir James  
Whitney

Your Honour, and Ladies and Gentlemen,—  
We have come together to-day to perform the final act in the expression of the appreciation of the Legislature of Ontario of the life and services of one of the great men of the Province.

The Honourable John Sandfield Macdonald, one of Her Majesty's Counsel, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and Prime Minister and Attorney-General, all of the old Province of Canada, composed of the two Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, and later on the first Prime Minister and Attorney-General of the Province of Ontario under the British North America Act, was descended from a Highland family which came from Scotland about the year 1786. He was born at St. Raphael, in the County of Glengarry, December 12, 1812, and received his elementary education there. Afterwards he attended the Grammar School at Cornwall, of which Rev. Hugh Urquhart, D.D., was then headmaster. He studied law, first with Mr. Archibald

Sir James  
Whitney

McLean, afterwards Chief Justice of Upper Canada, then with Mr. Draper, also afterwards Chief Justice of Upper Canada, was called to the Bar, and settled down to practise at Cornwall.

During the rebellion of 1837-8 he was sent to Washington with dispatches for the British Minister, and there met his future wife, a daughter of the Hon. George Waggaman, United States Senator from Louisiana. Mr. Macdonald was elected to Parliament for his native county of Glengarry in 1841. He sat for this constituency until the General Election of 1857, when he was returned for the constituency of Cornwall, which he represented until his death in 1872, his brother Donald succeeding him in Glengarry. His evident capacity brought him speedily to the front, and in 1849 he was chosen by Mr. Baldwin to succeed Hon. W. H. Blake as Solicitor-General. On the retirement of Messrs. Baldwin and Lafontaine in 1851 he was, on account of a difference with the Prime Minister as to the Portfolio he should assume, left out of the Government formed by Mr. Hincks, but was chosen Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in

1852. His next official position was that of <sup>Sir James Whitney</sup> Attorney-General in the short-lived Brown-Dorion Administration of 1858. In 1862 he became Prime Minister under very difficult conditions, and remained in power a little less than two years. On at least two occasions he declined flattering invitations to assume Ministerial responsibility, doing so on one of these occasions in the characteristic and laconic telegram, "No go."

Although opposed to the scheme of Confederation as planned, the task of organizing and bringing into force the Provincial Government under the new order of things was entrusted to him, and it is now admitted on all hands that he performed this very important work with credit to himself and to the advantage of the people.

This is not the time nor the occasion to enter into a consideration of his public acts, or, indeed, of his political career. However, a few words may be said about his individual or personal characteristics and as to how he appeared to those who knew him—now, alas, very few in number among the living. Mr. Macdonald was a man of great force of char-

acter and individuality. These were his predominant characteristics. Once he formed an opinion, or came to a conclusion on any subject, it was not easy to turn him aside. Consequently Party limitations and conditions galled him, and, as a rule, he went his own way and voted as he thought proper. The position he occupied in the political world was indeed unique. A Roman Catholic, he at first opposed Separate Schools, but afterwards acquiesced in the settlement of the question which was made; and as a Reformer he was distinctly antagonistic to what was known as the Clear Grit wing of the Party. His aloofness, so to speak, from Party discipline and control served him well, however, when he assumed the task of bringing into operation the first Provincial Government. The situation suited him exactly. His detached position left him free from Party entanglements, and he formed what he called a Combination Government, later on described as a Patent Combination. He was not, however, a successful political manager, and indeed, having regard to what I have indicated above, he could not have been one. It has been said of him by a friend

that a scrupulous concern for the interests of the people at large dominated him and never deserted him. No single act of wrong-doing in office to serve his own personal ends can be charged against him. His name is not tarnished by even a whisper of a charge of this character. So particular was he in this respect that in appointments to office he never selected his own relatives, though he might often have done so without injury to the public interests. Whatever might have been his shortcomings, he was as pure a statesman as ever lived. It mattered not to him that urgent applicants for favours might insinuate that it was the Treasury of the Province he had to deal with. He managed it as he did his own private affairs, and he much preferred to be generous with his own than with monies for the management of which he considered himself a Trustee. (Applause.)

As to his personal qualities they are well set forth in the language of a gentleman, now deceased, who was very close to him during the last five years of his life, and who said of him as follows:

“ Socially Mr. Macdonald had not many like him in the political world of Canada. Pos-



Sir James  
Whitney

essed of a ready wit, a most retentive memory and a keen appreciation of the ludicrous, he was always a chief spirit in every gathering not essentially of a public kind. He was fond of society—not fashionable society, merely, although with an outward air of seeming carelessness he had strong aristocratic leanings—but of society which added a relish to the more serious duties of life. His private means enabled him to entertain largely, and he did so in a generous manner, as one who took real pleasure in seeing his friends around him. Distinguished in private life by the largest-hearted hospitality, Mr. Macdonald counted his friends by hundreds. Whether it was that the Military were quartered at Cornwall, as at the time of the Fenian Raid, or a gunboat was anchored in the stream, or Assizes were going on in the town, Ivy Hall was open house. One of the last remarks he made was to remind his family that his friends, Mr. George Stephen (now Lord Mount-Stephen), Sir Hugh Allan, Mr. E. H. King, and Mr. Donald McInnes were expected that day to visit the manufacturing establishment about to be erected at Cornwall and must be invited to luncheon.”

Mr. Macdonald was one of the great men of the pre-Confederation era. His place in history will be alongside and not the least among, Draper, Baldwin, John A. Macdonald, Blake and Brown. If I may be allowed to say it, we of this generation should never forget that much of what we enjoy and prize to-day is the outcome and result of the ideas and labours of these men and their associates, all of whom loved to serve the State; and that out of the clash and friction of the often antagonistic views held and maintained by them have come many of the things which have made this country of ours "a land where freemen dwell," where settled Government obtains, where the moral standard of the people is high, and where God's blessing seems to rest. (Applause.)

As a witness and testimonial to the public services of Mr. Macdonald, the Government and Legislature of Ontario have decreed the erection of this monument, which it is my duty to ask His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to unveil.

In this hasty appreciation I have endeavoured to bring into relief merely the main characteristics of the man without attempting any-

Sir James  
Whitney

thing further. As one a few years of whose early life were passed within the influence of his personality, it has been a labour of love, tempered with anxiety, knowing my limitations, and I esteem it an honour and privilege indeed to be the instrument by which the Legislature of this Province has carried out its desire to honour one of the great men of the Province of Ontario.

His resting-place is surrounded by the graves of those who loved, admired and trusted him, while the memorial of his capacity and his services to the State finds a place among similar tributes to other great men and near to the effigy of the great Queen whose loyal subject and servant he was proud to be. (Loud applause.)

Sir James Whitney then called upon the Hon. A. G. MacKay, K.C., Leader of the Opposition in the Legislature.

Honourable  
A. G. MacKay

Hon. Mr. MacKay said:

Your Honour, Ladies and Gentlemen,—As usual, speaking from this side of the chamber I find the majority on the other side. (Laughter.) I may say that it affords me very great pleasure indeed to be here to take some small

part in this ceremony. As has just been explained by the Premier of this Province, this is a Provincial function. The Province, through the Legislature and the Government, has very properly and very fittingly decided to erect some memorial to the memory of a distinguished public man. An occasion of this kind has in it something of the sentimental. I do not know that a little more sentiment in Canadian life would be amiss. I do not know that in this age of materialism a trifle more of the sentimental would be an injury to Canadians as a whole.

So far as I can judge of the life of the late John Sandfield Macdonald—and I am not at all certain that I have a personal recollection of all the events of his life (laughter)—but so far as I can judge, perhaps the most striking thing the Premier has just said about him is that he was a man of great force of character. When you find a young man at twenty years of age, an ordinary lad, apparently, behind the counter in the shop; when you find him at that age apparently taking life seriously and determining upon a different course and a different career; when you find him with an ordinary public school education entering the Grammar

Honourable  
A. G. MacKay

School under the able tuition of Dr. Urquhart, and then find him two years later head boy of his class and school; when you find him entering law in 1835, called to the bar in 1840 and elected to the Parliament of Old Canada in 1841; when you find him elected by acclamation to represent the old County of Glengarry in 1848, 1852 and 1854; when you find him Premier of the Province of Canada in 1862 and in 1867 First Prime Minister of the Province of Ontario—these few outstanding facts in his life indicate, nay, prove conclusively, that he was not only a man of great force of character but a man of fine tenacity of purpose, a man, Sir, not only with great capacity for work but with an energetic application of that capacity.

Now, Sir, I do not purpose to occupy more than a few minutes of your time. A great deal has been said with reference to what may be called the personal history of the man. One's mind naturally, however, turns to his achievements as a public servant and the position he took with reference to the important problems that engaged the attention of Parliamentarians during his career; not with any view or intent of either criticizing or pretending to pass upon



the particular stand which he may have taken upon any public question. The present is not the occasion for such criticism. The question of responsible Government seems to have been decidedly the largest question dealt with by the Parliament of Old Canada during the earlier years in which the late John Sandfield Macdonald was a member of that Parliament. It is a pretty far cry, indeed, so far as constitutional Government in Canada is concerned, from 1841, when he first entered public life, to 1871, when he laid down the reins of office as Premier of this Province. Doubtless, sir, the older persons present will recall the situation in 1841, when he was called upon to give his first vote upon the question of responsible Government. It will be remembered that in October, 1839, Lord John Russell, then Colonial Secretary, in a despatch to the Right Honourable Poulette Thompson, enunciates his idea of the relationship that ought to exist between Downing Street, the Governor and the Executive Council. Lord Sydenham was then, and still in 1841, the Governor. Lord John Russell points out in effect that if the Governor is to be advised by the Executive Council and not by the home Government that

Honourable  
A. G. MacKay

he would occupy at once practically the position of an independent sovereign. I do not propose to criticise adversely or otherwise the stand taken by the late John Sandfield Macdonald on that important question, but simply to note that he was scarcely seated in Parliament in 1841 when he was called upon to vote upon a resolution that Parliament ought to exercise a constitutional control over the Executive, and that the Executive ought to be responsible to the people's representatives, and through them to the people; that the advisers of the Crown ought to be responsible to Parliament, and when they had not the confidence of Parliament, the advisers of the Crown ought to be changed. The contest was, in short, whether the Governor should control the Executive, or whether Parliament should control the Executive. I repeat, Sir, it is a far cry indeed, so far as constitutional Government is concerned, from the state of affairs that then existed to what now exists. The late John Sandfield Macdonald's first vote on this question was on what now would generally be conceded to be the wrong side; but as to this question his may be said to be a harvest that grew the more by

reaping, and his later stand upon the same question shows the decidedly independent character of the man and proves him to be a strong personality and above narrow partyism. It will be remembered that in 1843, or only two years later, when Sir Charles Metcalfe, the then Governor, maintained his right to consult the Executive Council only upon what he called "adequate occasions," and he was himself, of course, to be the judge of what occasions were "adequate," the then Baldwin-Lafontaine Government resigned as a protest, and the same John Sandfield Macdonald, who in 1841 fought with the Loyalists, in 1843 went back to the same old County of Glengarry, supported the Ministry in its then contention and, notwithstanding his decided change of front, very considerably increased his majority. The man who could do that had not only strength of character but a home strength that few public men have.

The leading events of his career have been very succinctly and neatly set out by the Prime Minister of this Province. He touched upon what, after all, is the strongest characteristic of any man in either private or public life; above and beyond party, above and beyond know-

Honourable  
A. G. MacKay

ledge, above and beyond intellect, surpassing all these are the honesty and integrity of the man, whether in private or public life. He was not a place man. After he had been Solicitor-General in 1849 and 1850 he could have been head of the Crown Lands Department in 1851 had he so desired; and as to the question of responsibility, how different is the position of a Minister of Crown Lands now to the then head of a Crown Lands Department. How happy our Minister of Crown Lands would be if he were not responsible to the people and did not have to assume the responsibility of advising the Governor, not being a member of the Executive Council! But what I was about to say was that the late John Sandfield Macdonald was evidently not only not a place man but he was evidently an independent man. Having been Solicitor-General in 1849 and 1850 in the Baldwin-Lafontaine administration, and having in 1851 been offered the office of head of the Crown Lands in the Hincks administration, he promptly declined to accept the same, presumably upon the ground that having been Solicitor-General he was naturally in line for the Attorney-Generalship. Not having been offered the same, he declined to

accept any different portfolio. He occupied the Speaker's chair from '52 to '54 and was Attorney-General in 1858 in the Brown-Dorion administration, and, as has been already pointed out, he was Premier and Attorney-General of the old Province of Canada from 1862 to 1864 and was First Premier of this Province from '67 to '71.

Honourable  
A. G. MacKay

But in summing up his life, your Honour, I think all Canadians will agree in this, that he was a man of undoubted integrity, of very considerable energy, outspoken, and independent in thought and action. We may criticise adversely or otherwise many of the acts of this public man who is gone; we may differ with him as to the view he took at the outset with respect to the great question of responsible government; we may differ with him as to his position taken upon the somewhat important question of representation by population; we may differ with him in his opposition to Confederation; but I think, sir, all are agreed in this, that when he passed off the public stage and laid down the seals of office he left behind him a record of integrity and honesty, the record of a blameless and unimpeachable public life; and in so doing he left behind him



Honourable  
A. G. MacKay the greatest legacy that a public man could  
possibly leave to succeeding parliamentarians  
and generations. (Loud Applause.)

Sir James  
Whitney Sir James Whitney then said:

Your Honour,—We have here to-day a gentleman who was a former law partner of Mr. Macdonald, Mr. D. B. Maclellan, King's Counsel, of Cornwall, who has kindly consented to say a few words.

Mr. D. B.  
Maclellan Mr. Maclellan, standing near the centre of  
the aisle dividing the House, said:

Your Honour, ladies and gentlemen,—I suppose this will be the best position for a man who is supposed to take a non-partisan view of the function that we are dealing with to-day. We have heard the Premier of the Province on one side and Mr. MacKay upon the other. As an old friend of the late John Sandfield Macdonald, and as a continued friend of the family who have survived him, it affords me very great pleasure to be here to-day to say a word or two.

There is very little left to be said after the fine appreciation of the Premier and the very cordial and full address of Mr. MacKay. I

think probably the sketches that we have of the life of the late Mr. Macdonald are rather misleading. He has been described as a man who was erratic, who floated from side to side, while the very opposite is the case. He always stood firm, and generally when he disagreed with anybody it was the other man who took the wrong side. Now, the reason that Mr. Dent and afterwards Mr. Rattray have failed to get a proper appreciation and to present to the public a proper estimate of Mr. Macdonald's career is because they themselves failed to grasp the cardinal feature of Mr. Macdonald's character as a politician.

Now, the cardinal feature of his character as a parliamentarian was, first of all, honesty of purpose. There is no doubt whatever in regard to that. It is true he had some mental peculiarities, and one of these was that he would not submit to dictation from anybody. He would not join a Government if the Leader of that Government entertained views to which he could not assent. He took this stand from an honest motive, because he thought that if he gave up any of his opinions entertained with regard to political questions for the sake of securing position, he would be

Mr. D. B.  
MacLennan



Mr. D. B.  
MacLennan

selling himself. Now, probably in that Mr. Macdonald may not have been right, because I think it is generally conceded now that in the formation of political organizations for the administration of the affairs of the country there must be concessions to secure accord, and there must be accord for the purpose of carrying on the Government of the country. Mr. Macdonald's reason for that attitude is one that we can appreciate and approve when we look at it from his standpoint. We find that he found it extremely difficult to co-operate with any Leader. As he was about to be introduced into the Cabinet of Mr. Hincks he quarreled with Mr. Hincks before he got in. He had the opportunity of going in, but would not go. Four years later, in a Cabinet the duration of which is variously estimated at from two to four days, of which Mr. Macdonald was a member, that period was long enough to see the development of some pretty acute disagreements between Mr. Macdonald and his Leader, the late Honourable George Brown. If that Government had not resigned at the end of four days, we would certainly have had a resignation in that Government before the week's

end, and Mr. Macdonald would have been out of the Government because he could not get on with the Leader. Now, that was characteristic of Mr. Macdonald. I do not cite it from any disrespect for Mr. Brown, who was a great man, but these two men were very much of the same kind. They were both rather inclined to be dictatorial, and if you get two dictators joined together, either one or the other must give way. But later on, after the lapse of another period of four years, in the year 1862, when Mr. Macdonald was called upon to form a Government, we find those characteristic features during his two years of administration of the Governments of Canada were just the complement of what his characteristics were before. While before he was a colleague who could not accept the dictation of a Leader, when he became a Leader he did not dictate to anybody. When he became the Leader of the Government he accepted the suggestions of other colleagues, and when a colleague had a suggestion on any particular point, the person first to approve of it was generally the Prime Minister. Now the same occurred in the year 1867, when he was the first Premier of the Province. No

Mr. D. B.  
MacLennan

man was more genial, more respected by his colleagues; no man paid greater consideration to his colleagues than did the Premier at that time. We have never heard of any disagreement; generally the view of the majority prevailed, but as before, as Mr. Macdonald did in his earlier Premiership, so he did from the year 1867 down to 1871, and all his colleagues, from Matthew Crooks Cameron down, bear testimony that there never was a more generous Leader nor a man with whom it was easier to get on when he was Leader than the late Mr. Sandfield Macdonald.

Now, of course, we find him here in these two situations. In the one situation he fitted in well. If, as a colleague in a Government, he did not adopt the proper view, the view he took is one which we can respect and one which is attributable to his distinct and well-understood honesty of purpose, because if there ever was an honest politician in this or any other country, John Sandfield Macdonald was an honest politician; there is no doubt whatever in regard to that. Now, after he passes away we find what is somewhat unique in the history of a politician—we find that his record was very often cited as an example of

the proper method of administering the Gov-  
ernment of a country. Those who were  
readers of the *Toronto Mail* during the  
twenty years following Mr. Macdonald's  
death will very well remember that that paper  
referred frequently to the fine record of the  
late John Sandfield Macdonald as an adminis-  
trator of the Government. Now, it is just an  
accident that that reference was made by  
the *Mail* instead of by the *Globe*. It  
was done by the *Mail* because that paper  
brought these reminiscences forward as a  
means of criticism of the Government of  
the day, and if Sir Oliver Mowat had  
not been so tenacious of power, and if the  
Conservatives had been in power, the *Globe*  
probably would have referred to Sandfield  
Macdonald's record in its criticism of that  
Government.

Mr. D. B.  
MacLennan

Now, these recollections and these refer-  
ences to a great man have ceased to appear.  
We have heard nothing of them for some  
time, and very, very opportunely the Govern-  
ment of this Province has thought proper, and  
I think very wisely so, to erect a memorial in  
the form of a statue which His Honour will  
very shortly unveil to perpetuate the memory

of this great man. Some people think that that is not the best way to perpetuate one's memory. We all remember that the late Dr. McCaul, a man of great eloquence, when making a speech and pouring out his rolling periods, spoke of some man's fame as enduring forever, and contrasted it with the short-lived memorial furnished by brass and marble, but the good doctor was a little mistaken about that. He nailed the negative part of the proposition to his masthead; that is, he took the exception instead of grasping the rule, and the rule is, however great a man may be, the memory of him will soon pass away. But the Government of this Province has determined that the memory of the late Premier shall not pass away, and for succeeding generations the monument which will be unveiled to-day will recall the history of a man whose compatriots and contemporaries have all passed away.

The duty which I have now to perform is an exceedingly pleasant duty, that is to return to the Government and especially to Sir James Whitney, the Premier, the thanks of Mr. Macdonald's family and surviving friends for the very considerate and proper action which they have taken in erecting the statue which is



to be unveiled to-day. I think that the people of this country generally, the people of this Province generally, approve very highly of what the Government has done. They have good reason to approve of it. What has been done has recalled and has brought up the memory afresh of Mr. Macdonald's fine career, and it will perpetuate that career for all time. I have to thank the Government, I have to thank Sir James Whitney for having done what they have done. Many people in Stormont and Glengarry have observed the announcement of the project, which is receiving its final touch to-day, with the greatest possible satisfaction. It has pleased everybody of both political parties; it is taken to be a non-partisan movement, and both political parties are extremely well pleased. We have with us to-day Mr. Macdonald's daughter, Madame Langlois, who is a resident of the Province of Quebec. The other daughters are residents of England, but Madame Langlois is here to-day, as well as her two sons, and I am sure it gives them great satisfaction to be present on this occasion and to witness the presence of so large an assemblage to do honour to the memory of their distinguished progenitor. (Applause.)

Mr. D. B.  
MacLennan



Sir James  
Whitney

Sir James Whitney:—The artist and sculptor, Mr. Allward, is, I believe, present somewhere, but, with a peculiar modesty, almost equal, I may say to that of the average lawyer (laughter), he objects to come forward and be heard, but is perfectly content and satisfied if we will let him alone and allow the work to be judged by its appearance in future.

Now, owing to the inclemency of the weather, the possibility of which I may say we had in view when we decided that the proceedings should take place in this Chamber, and very fortunately so apparently—owing to the weather, I would suggest that Your Honour perform the duty that falls to you, Sir, without leaving the room, and instead of going down to the monument outside, that Your Honour will order that the monument be unveiled, which will be done. (Applause.)

His Honour  
the Lieutenant  
Governor

His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor:—Sir James, ladies and gentlemen,—The position I have been occupying here during the last half hour is rather unique, listening from the Speaker's Chair or the Throne to speeches by the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition. It is apt to suggest an

extremely anomalous situation. (Hear, hear, His Honour  
the Lieutenant  
Governor and laughter.) However, it has been very agreeable, notwithstanding any unconstitutional aspect that might be suggested. It is indeed a pleasant thing when public men of both political parties, without regard to present political antagonisms, can unite on an occasion such as this in doing honour to a prominent public man of days gone by. I desire to express the great pleasure that I have felt in common, I know, with you all in listening to the short account given of the life of this statesman by his old student at law and by his old partner. It is fitting and proper, that, occupying the very prominent positions which they occupy in the country and in the community, they should be the spokesmen of this occasion, interpreting publicly what they believe to be the prevailing sentiment and what I think they have truly and fairly and reasonably stated to be the public sentiment regarding a prominent statesman who has disappeared from the scene years ago.

I may be permitted to say a word or two, although I have come here with the idea of merely performing a very formal part in con-

His Honour  
the Lieutenant  
Governor

nection with this ceremony. One can scarcely listen to what has been said without some ideas occurring to him, and I am going to take the liberty of just a word or two. In common with many of my own age—not extremely old and not by any means as young as we used to be—I have a distinct recollection of the late John Sandfield Macdonald, though never having had a personal acquaintance. I was then a reader of the newspapers, of political discussions in the newspapers, and was one who formed, at that comparatively early age, a decided admiration of many of the characteristics of the man. Undoubtedly, in his later career, or towards the end of his political career, he had a pretty hard place to fill in the Legislature. Others subsequent to that time have also had that. (laughter). But one cannot recall those days in 1871 without feeling a good deal of sympathy with a leader of a political party who occupied his position and went through what he did. So far as I can recall the situation, I do not think that he was put out of power on account of either any irregularity of administration or of any criticism that he had exposed himself to in connection with his

public policy. It is true that fault was found because some of the public institutions had been placed in localities where the political atmosphere was congenial. Well, nowadays and long since—ever since, perhaps, I may say—Governments have not thought very much of that, neither do political parties, neither do the public. Other things being equal, or pretty nearly equal, it seems almost a natural thing to do, and I think that was one of the main sins that he was credited with at that time.

His Honour  
the Lieutenant  
Governor

Perhaps, after all, his chief sinning was that he, by means of his Patent Combination Government, as the phrase has already been used, was keeping out of power the Liberal party, who thought they represented the Province at large. I think that was really the reason that he was displaced, although everyone will admit, the most extreme Liberals of the present day with a knowledge of public men of that time will admit, must admit, that he had associated with him in the Government of this Province men of great ability, of the highest reputation for integrity and honesty that any man could have surrounded himself with. He was said to be a pretty close man in connection with the finances of the Province,

His Honour  
the Lieutenant  
Governor

almost approaching to the extent of meanness.

It is true that the economy of his administration, financially speaking, went to the extreme, but in those early days of Confederation, when the wheels of the new constitution were being merely set in motion, it was the part of the prudent statesman, the prudent administrator, to go cautiously and slowly, and not to establish permanent methods of expenditure which the financial resources and the normal revenues of the Province might not warrant. The best proof that he was justified in being cautious in reference to the financial administration, is to be found in the budget speeches of his Treasurer, and it is almost amusing to read some of those speeches and to observe the great anxiety of the Provincial Treasurer of those days lest the absolute necessities of the administration might go beyond the financial powers of the Province in those early days, and then to compare the revenues and expenditures of those days with the revenues and expenditures of days not long subsequent, and particularly at the present time. No public man should be criticised because he shows evidences of thrift and of caution, and those two characteristics were very strongly brought



out in the administration of the affairs of this Province by the Honourable John Sandfield Macdonald.

His Honour  
the Lieutenant  
Governor

Now, we all know that the public man seldom gets justice while he is alive. The verdict of the people is generally very severe on him, and is almost certain to fail in doing him justice. That is, to a certain extent, the result of partyism, but not altogether. The verdict of posterity is apt to be just, and is sometimes more than just, with regard to public men who have gone. At all events it is a pleasant thing to know that after a public man's life is over, after he is dead and gone the public do not altogether forget the good record he has left behind him, that his good deeds should live after him, that his record, which he appreciated when he was making it, but which his fellow citizens did not appreciate to the full extent, is recognized in the years which follow after, and it is therefore, as I say, a pleasure to see the public represented on the present occasion, both political parties doing honor to a gentleman who was a leading public man of his Province, and whose period of greatness was a period of the utmost importance to the well-being of this Province during the last forty or fifty years.



His Honour  
the Lieutenant  
Governor

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I shall not detain you by making any further extempore remarks, but, in pursuance of the suggestion that has been made, formally unveil this statue in the name of the people of this Province of Ontario to the honour and the memory of this good man who occupied so prominent a position in public life. An honest man, certainly a man of great independence of thought and action, a man with whom the chief consideration, the only consideration, was what was for the good and the benefit and the advantage of his country, a man whose chief ambition, whose ruling ambition, through public life at all events, was that he should be a faithful public servant. I now, therefore, direct that the statue of the first Prime Minister of this Province, the Honourable John Sandfield Macdonald, be duly unveiled to the public. (Applause.)

As His Honour concluded, a signal was given to the artist, Mr. Allward, who had in the meantime taken his position close to the statue, and the folds of the Union Jack fell away, revealing the figure of the well-known statesman. Only one opinion was expressed by

those who knew Mr. Macdonald, viz., that the statue is in every respect a success. The suggestion of power and action in the pose of the figure was noticed and commented upon favorably.

In view of the historic nature of the occasion the Government decided to publish these addresses in the present form, along with the accompanying press comment, as a convenient means of recording the appreciation by the present generation of the life and character of the first Prime Minister of Ontario.

*Globe*, Toronto, November 17th, 1909:—The Globe  
The place occupied in Canadian political history by the statesman in whose honour a statue was yesterday unveiled in the vicinity of the Ontario Parliament buildings is not merely definite but clearly ascertainable. He entered public life before he was thirty, and he remained in it till his death at sixty. The intervening thirty years were filled with ceaseless activity in one or other of the three Parliaments of which he was a member: that of the Province of Canada prior to 1867, and those of the Dominion of Canada and the Province of Ontario, respectively, after that date. He was elected to the first Canadian Parliament after the union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1841, and he was Premier of the first Minis-

The Globe try of the Province of Ontario from 1867 to 1871. His death took place in 1872.

Mr. Macdonald entered political life with his mind made up as to the expediency, if not the necessity, of introducing "responsible government." He had seen for himself the outcome of a half century of irresponsible administration, and he assisted in carrying into effect the views of Lord Durham. The struggle for the establishment of the system lasted till 1847, and during all the intervening period he played the part of an independent Reformer. This attitude he never abandoned, and on some important questions he never co-operated with the party to which he nominally belonged. One of these was "representation by population," which he steadily opposed, though he also opposed a Federal union as the means of resolving what threatened to become a chronic deadlock. No one knew better than he the hopelessness of the situation, for he carried on an Administration from 1862 to 1864 with a majority of only two in the popular Chamber.

It fell to Mr. Macdonald's lot, as the first Premier of Ontario, to organize the public service of this Province and give direction to its legislation. How well he did this work is best shown by the fact that the lines he laid down and the precedents he set have never since been greatly departed from. As a Parliamentary leader he lacked the finesse that was so outstanding an accomplishment in Sir John Macdonald, his great contemporary,

but he was perfectly trustworthy in the management of the public finances, and he was by no means unprogressive in the measures he took for the development of the country—rather was taking, for his administrative career was prematurely cut short by a Parliamentary defeat, followed soon after by his death. The Globe

It was eminently fitting that the present Premier of the Province, Sir James Whitney, should be privileged to pronounce a eulogy on the first man who held his present position, and in whose office he studied for the legal profession. The opportunity was a good one for the leader of the Opposition, Mr. A. G. MacKay, to display his well-known aptitude for delivering public addresses. Their speeches, and that of Lieutenant-Governor Gibson, who did the unveiling, were quite worthy of the occasion and of the subject.

*The News*, Toronto, November 16th, 1909: The News  
—John Sandfield Macdonald, the statue to whose memory was unveiled to-day by Hon. J. M. Gibson, well deserves the tribute paid him by his native Province. He played a large part in the history of Old Canada after the Union of 1841. He possessed talent, industry and character. Of marked independence, he refused to follow the lead of George Brown, nor could Sir John Macdonald, with all his art, ensnare him. Sandfield, as he was universally called, remained to the end a Liberal of moderate views, and always dis-

The News dained office unless it came to him on his own terms.

Such a man was unique then as he would be unique now. During the period of racial and religious tension, which lasted from 1855 to 1865, he was called to the place of First Minister by Sir Edmund Head. But his Government went the way of all the others. When the leading men of both parties, seeing that a new Constitution on a wider basis was necessary, coalesced to carry Confederation, Sandfield, curiously enough, remained aloof. It would have been better tactics to have joined the others, but he sat by, cynical and unyielding, when Union emerged from political chaos.

Once the thing was done, however, it was characteristic of Sandfield Macdonald to accept the new order, and work under it with spirit and fidelity. There never was a close understanding between him and Sir John Macdonald. The latter, as the first Prime Minister of the Dominion, must have suggested to Lord Monck in 1867 the advisability of selecting Sandfield to form the first Ontario Government. It was of necessity a coalition. The Conservatives supported it in a body. A few Liberals—known to history as the Nine Martyrs—followed Sandfield. The arrangement gave great offence to the stalwart Liberals, led by Brown, Mackenzie and Blake. Brown was out of both Legislature and Parliament. He was the power behind the throne.

As dual representation prevailed, Mackenzie



and Blake sat in both Houses, the former leading at Ottawa, the latter at Toronto. To oppose this powerful combination was the task of a political Hercules. But Sandfield Macdonald brought his alert mind and high courage into play, and his defeat was due solely to his carelessness as a tactician, not to any lack of statesmanship or creative power.

Having amassed an ample fortune in the practice of his profession, possessing a long Parliamentary experience, and knowing his own Province intimately, Sandfield Macdonald made an admirable Prime Minister. His pride of race drew to him the willing allegiance of the Highlanders, and his breadth of view secured him the respect of many Protestants. He gave Ontario clean, honest, vigorous government. The record of Provincial administration during the five years succeeding Confederation is a creditable page in our annals. The foundations on which we have since built were all laid then—sound finance, organized education, agricultural training, institutions for the sick and afflicted.

Party strife never ceased, and Blake and Mackenzie co-operated with an enthusiasm which they were not to show subsequently in the Federal arena. Mr. Pope, in his memoirs of Sir John Macdonald, says that materials exist for writing the history of the downfall of the Ministry. The secret chronicles we have not, but the facts known to all men sufficiently explain the result. The general election of



The News 1871 had greatly reduced his majority, and Sandfield summoned the Legislature before the protested elections were decided. The Ministry fell after some dramatic scenes in the Legislature, and its chief, sick and dispirited, soon after passed to his rest.

It is appropriate that the erection of a handsome statue to our first Prime Minister should proceed from a Government which resembles that of Sandfield Macdonald in some of its best aspects, and whose First Minister was closely associated with him as a young law student and a political supporter. The event of to-day preserves for succeeding generations a political career which well deserves a public tribute, and the fact that Sir James Whitney worthily occupies the post once held by John Sandfield Macdonald adds to the interest of the occasion.

The Daily Star *The Daily Star*, Toronto, November 17th, 1909:—The career of John Sandfield Macdonald, whose statue was unveiled at the Parliament Buildings yesterday, bridges over an important change in the history of Canada. He was the head of one of the Governments of Old Canada before Confederation. He was the first Premier of the new Province of Ontario. He had numerous opportunities of observing the defects of the old system, and he helped to place the new system on a solid basis. All agree that he was an honest, thrifty, and patriotic Minister, and a lovable man, with

just enough snap and temper to save his goodness from insipidity. The Daily Star

Because the history of Canada has been almost free from bloodshed it is sometimes thought to be lacking in interest and even in importance. But it may be just because of the moderation and good sense of our public men that our history has been peaceful. It would not have been difficult for rash and unwise men to involve Canada in a serious racial and religious quarrel, or in a quarrel with the United States. Our public men of both parties are entitled to more credit than they receive for their handling of these questions.

Without involving Great Britain in any serious difficulty, or causing her any great anxiety, Canada achieved self-government, and after some years of trial exchanged the old legislative union for a federal system, and enlarged the old Province of Canada to a Dominion extending from ocean to ocean. These ideas were in the main conceived and worked out by Canadians, and their achievements are legitimate subjects for national pride and gratitude.

Printed by  
WILLIAM BRIGGS  
29-37 Richmond Street West  
TORONTO



